



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney*

*Eastern District of Virginia*

*Paul J. McNulty*

*United States Attorney*

*2100 Jamieson Avenue*

*Alexandria, Virginia 22314*

*(703)299-3700*

*Fax: 703-549-5202*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release  
Alexandria, Virginia  
March 12, 2004

For further information contact  
Sam Dibbley 703-842-4050

Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, and Peter D. Keisler, Assistant Attorney General, Civil Division, U.S. Department of Justice, announced that pharmacist Luke J. Coukos was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Leonie M. Brinkema to 60 months in prison and a fine of \$140,318. Coukos pleaded guilty on December 19, 2003, to conspiring to violate the Controlled Substances Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act in connection with the illegal sale of controlled substances and other prescription drugs over the Internet to consumers through various websites. Physician Marvin J. Brown also pleaded guilty on December 19, 2003, to related charges and is awaiting sentencing.

These charges are related to a 108-count indictment pending in this District against Vincent K. Chhabra and nine other individuals charging that Chhabra and his co-conspirators used an "online ordering process" to allow customers to order prescription controlled substance drugs over the Internet, through such websites as "www.get-it-on.com." When customers ordered drugs online, the indictment charges that the customers chose the type, quantity, and dose of controlled substances they wanted, and answered some questions on a medical form. However, no one checked the accuracy of the information that customers provided, as the Controlled Substances Act requires, and customers obtained the drugs without ever meeting a doctor face-to-face, as required by law. The trial in that case is scheduled for June 7, 2004.

Mr. McNulty stated, "This conviction is a significant step in our efforts to crack down on those who exploit the Internet to feign legitimacy when they are, in fact, drug traffickers."

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Criminal Investigations, and the Drug Enforcement Administration. Assistant United States Attorneys James P. Gillis and Karen L. Taylor, and Department of Justice Office of Consumer Litigation Attorneys Linda I. Marks and Jill P. Furman, are handling the prosecution for the United States.